



**United States Attorney's Office
District of Columbia**

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, March 20, 2009

USAO Public Affairs

(202) 514-6933

www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc

Maryland man sentenced to twelve months and one day in prison for his involvement in a conspiracy to negotiate counterfeit checks

WASHINGTON - A 39-year-old Maryland man, Royal Richardson, has been sentenced to serve twelve months and one day in prison for his part in a conspiracy to commit bank fraud by negotiating counterfeit checks, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor and Jeffrey Irvine, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Secret Service Washington Field Office, announced today.

Richardson, 39, received his sentence on March 16, 2009, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia before the Honorable John D. Bates, who also ordered that Richardson be placed on three years of supervised release upon completion of his prison sentence. As part of his sentence, Richardson was ordered to pay a money judgment in the amount of \$8,260. He must also pay restitution to Bank of America ("BOA") in the amount of \$24,781 jointly and severally with his co-conspirators. Richardson pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit bank fraud on November 21, 2008.

Cathlena Heid, 23, of Hyattsville, Maryland, a co-conspirator who pled guilty to conspiracy on June 13, 2008, and was sentenced on March 18, 2009, by Judge Bates. Heid received a term of 36 months of probation and ordered to pay restitution jointly and severally with the other co-conspirators.

David Fitzgerald, 27, of Washington, D.C., a co-conspirator who pled guilty to conspiracy on June 20, 2008, is scheduled for sentencing on April 1, 2009.

According to the evidence presented at Richardson's plea hearing, on or about July 2004, Fitzgerald, discussed with Richardson a scheme to defraud BOA using counterfeit

checks in Maryland. Richardson and Fitzgerald approached Heid, a teller the men knew who was employed at BOA in Washington, D.C. Richardson and Fitzgerald asked Heid to provide account information of BOA commercial account holders in order to produce fraudulent checks. Fitzgerald and Richardson then used the legitimate account information provided by Heid to produce counterfeit checks made payable to fictitious payees. Fitzgerald and Richardson went to BOA where Heid worked and waited in her teller line for her to be available. Over the course of several days, Heid cashed 25 counterfeit checks for the men. The counterfeit checks were made in an amount to avoid anti-fraud measures instituted by BOA. The total value of the fraudulent checks negotiated in the District of Columbia by the co-conspirators was \$24,781.00.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Taylor and U.S. Secret Service Special Agent in Charge Irvine commended the efforts of the Special Agent Thomas Jeffrey Burnside of the United States Secret Service, former Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeannie Rhee, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Diane Lucas, who investigated and prosecuted the case.

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